

4 Tips for thriving through menopause



Things you can do to treat menopause symptoms



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Did you know that 75% of women will experience some symptoms related to menopause? It's a natural part of life that usually occurs between ages 45-55, but it can happen sooner, and each individual experiences it differently.

Menopause is a natural biological process that marks the end of a woman's reproductive years, resulting from a decline in oestrogen production in the ovaries. Common symptoms include:

- Hot flushes
- Night sweats
- Difficulty sleeping
- Mood changes
- Vaginal dryness
- Weight gain and reduced libido

If you think you are going through the menopause, seeking advice from your GP on the right support options for you is recommended. And there are some day-to-day things you can do yourself that can help. A balanced and healthy diet can ease menopause symptoms and support your overall well-being during this transitional phase of life. Here we'll take a look at how diet and physical activity can help you thrive through menopause:

Foods to avoid during menopause

Foods high in saturated fats, sugars, and alcohol can exacerbate menopause symptoms such as hot flushes and mood swings. It's advisable to limit your intake of these substances to maintain a healthier lifestyle during this phase.

- Sugary, processed foods
- High-sodium foods
- Alcohol
- Caffeinated beverages
- Spicy foods

Foods to include in your diet

Including high fibre foods and foods rich in phytoestrogens can help balance fluctuating hormone levels. These include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and foods like soy and flaxseeds which are particularly high in phytoestrogens.

- Fruits and vegetables
- Whole grains
- Lean protein sources
- Dairy or calcium-fortified alternatives
- Omega-3 fatty acids (found in fish, nuts, and seeds)

Exercise can help relieve menopause symptoms

Regular physical activity is incredibly beneficial during menopause for a couple of key reasons. Firstly, it can boost your mood. Physical activity triggers the release of endorphins, the body's natural mood elevators, which can help alleviate feelings of anxiety or depression, often experienced during menopause.

Secondly, it can contribute to better sleep by helping regulate circadian rhythms, reducing night sweats and insomnia, which are common menopausal symptoms.

Lastly, it helps combat weight gain, a common concern for many women during this phase due to hormonal changes. Regular exercise burns calories, which can prevent excess weight gain and help maintain a healthy weight.

- **Yoga:** This gentle exercise helps with flexibility, balance, and stress reduction. Certain yoga poses can even help with hot flashes and mood swings.
- **Aerobics:** Low-impact aerobic exercises, such as walking or swimming, can help improve cardiovascular health and manage weight.
- **Strength Training:** Lifting weights or resistance training can combat loss of muscle mass and strengthen bones, reducing the risk of osteoporosis.
- **Tai Chi:** This mindfulness-based movement can help reduce stress and improve sleep quality.
- **Pilates:** This form of exercise can help maintain body flexibility, build strength, and improve mood.
- **Cycling:** Regular biking, whether stationary or outdoors, can burn calories and improve overall cardiovascular health.

Other self-care tips for managing menopause symptoms

To further support your journey through menopause, there are a variety of self-care practices that can help alleviate symptoms while promoting a sense of well-being. Here are four additional tips to consider:

- **Stay hydrated:** Drinking plenty of water can help combat symptoms of dehydration that may arise due to hormonal changes during menopause, including dry skin and bloating.
- **Practice relaxation techniques, such as meditation or deep breathing exercises:** Practising relaxation techniques, such as meditation or deep breathing exercises, may help manage mood swings, anxiety, and stress often associated with menopause by promoting mental calmness and emotional balance.

- Seek support from friends, family, or support groups: Menopause can be an emotionally challenging period due to hormonal changes, and having a strong support system can provide emotional comfort, understanding and encouragement, easing the stress and anxieties that may come along with this stage of life.
- Connect with your healthcare provider for personalised advice and effective menopause treatment options. They're there to support you.

Our Health Shield Health Cash Plan offers several benefits that can be particularly useful during menopause.

1. **Money back on complementary therapies:** You can make use of treatments such as acupuncture, homeopathy, reflexology, and osteopathy, which have been known to help ease some of the symptoms of menopause like hot flushes, sleep disturbances, and mood swings. Our plan provides cover for these therapies, so you can explore these options without worrying about the cost.*
2. **Counselling services:** The transition through menopause can sometimes take a toll on mental health. Our plan includes access to professional counselling services, which can provide a safe space to express and manage anxiety, stress, or mood swings associated with menopause.
3. **Gym membership reimbursement:** Regular exercise is known to sooth several menopause symptoms. Our plan includes discounts for gym membership fees, encouraging you to stay active and committed to your physical fitness during this period.
4. As well as our cash plans we also offer onsite health checks through Health Shield Wellbeing, which includes an option of a menopause health check. This clinical support service includes a symptoms checker, blood test for key markers, and a 60-minute online appointment with a menopause specialist nurse who will discuss results, give advice, and talk through ongoing treatment options. Provided by our expert partners. Available in addition to any of our health checks.

These are just a few of the benefits available for you. Be sure to check your policy for a full list of benefits or speak to one of our Health Shield advisors if you need further assistance.

Additional resources

- NHS information on the menopause: [Visit the website.](#)
- International Menopause Society: [Visit the website.](#)
- Henpicked articles on menopause in the workplace. [Visit the website.](#)

*Please refer to your plan's terms and conditions before receiving any treatment. The amounts that can be claimed per year depends on the type and level of policy. The services available on mywellness may differ according to the type of plan. Services and information available on mywellness can change without notice.

Make the most of your *my*wellness benefits

Don't miss out on the range of wellbeing services included in your health cash plan - access them easily online to support your health.

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Got a question about your cash plan?
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